

**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS  
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**Menno School District  
Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process Report 2002-2003**

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**Dates of On Site Visit:** October 15-16, 2002

**Date of Report:** October 28, 2002

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This report contains the results of the steering committee's self-assessment and the validation of the self-assessment by the Office of Special Education. The report addresses six principles – General Supervision, Free Appropriate Public Education, Appropriate Evaluation, Procedural Safeguards, Individualized Education Program and Least Restrictive Environment. Each principle is rated based on the following scale:

<b>Promising Practice</b>	The district/agency exceeds this requirement through the implementation of innovative, high-quality programming and instructional practices.
<b>Meets Requirements</b>	The district/agency consistently meets this requirement.
<b>Needs Improvement</b>	The district/agency has met this requirement but has identified areas of weakness that left unaddressed may result in non-compliance.
<b>Out of Compliance</b>	The district/agency consistently does not meet this requirement.
<b>Not Applicable</b>	In a small number of cases, the standard may not be applicable for your district/agency. If an item is not applicable, the steering committee should briefly explain why the item is NA. Example – no private schools within the district boundaries.

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<b>Principle 1 – General Supervision</b>
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General supervision means the school district's administrative responsibilities to ensure federal and state regulations are implemented and a free appropriate public education is provided for each eligible child with a disability. The specific areas addressed in principle one are child find, referral procedures, children voluntarily enrolled by parents in private schools, students placed by the school district, improving results through performance goals and indicators (assessment, drop out, graduation), professional development, suspension and expulsion rates.

**Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Enrollment Data
- Comprehensive Plan
- File Review
- Budget Information
- Child Count

- Staff Information
- Sat 9 Participation Rates
- Exiting Data
- Suspension & Expulsion Data
- Menno District Negotiated Agreement
- Staff Employment Records
- Surveys

### **Meets Requirements**

The Menno Public School District has an established and effectively implemented ongoing child find system to locate, identify and evaluate children with disabilities, ages birth through 21 years who may need special education.

The Menno Public School places or refers children with disabilities in private schools or facilities, and they do ensure special education and related services are provided in accordance with an individual education program (IEP).

The Menno Public School uses data-based decision-making procedures to review and analyze school district-level data to determine if the school district is making progress toward the state's performance goals and indicators.

The Menno Public School uses data-based decision-making procedures to review and analyze school district-level discipline data to determine if significant discrepancies are occurring between the long-term suspension and expulsion rates for children with and without disabilities.

The Menno Public School does ensure it employs or contracts with an adequate supply of personnel who are appropriately supervised, and fully licensed or certified to work with children with disabilities. The district implements procedures to determine personnel development needs (including those of children with disabilities and their families) and takes appropriate action to meet those identified needs.

### **Needs Improvement**

The Menno Public School has an effective pre-referral and referral system in place to ensure students are identified without unnecessary delay, but the steering committee feels that improvement would be helpful to initiate the Teacher Assistance Team, which will help to eliminate unnecessary evaluations.

## **Validation Results**

### **Meets Requirements**

The monitoring team agrees that all items identified by the steering committee in Principle 1- General Supervision meets requirements.

### **Needs Improvement**

The monitoring team agrees with the area identified as needs improvement for General Supervision-Referral concluded by the steering committee. Staff indicated at the onsite review that steps have been initiated this school year to improve in this area.

## **Principle 2 – Free Appropriate Public Education**

All eligible children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The specific areas addressed in principle two are the provision of FAPE to children residing in group homes, foster homes, or institutions, making FAPE available when a child reaches his/her 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday and providing FAPE to eligible children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 cumulative days.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive Plan
- IEP Review
- Budget Information
- Suspension & Expulsion Data
- Parent and Student Surveys
- Law Seminar
- JMC Program
- Data by age and placement alternative
- Placement Alternatives

#### **Meets Requirements**

The Menno Public School provides a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to all eligible children with disabilities.

The Menno Public School follows all appropriate policies and procedures when removing children with disabilities from school settings for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year. Menno Public School's staff are appropriately trained and there are existing systems in place to address potential disciplinary/ behavioral concerns.

### **Validation Results**

#### **Meets Requirements**

The monitoring team agrees that all items identified by the steering committee in Principle 2- Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) meets requirements.

## **Principle 3 – Appropriate Evaluation**

A comprehensive evaluation is conducted by a team of knowledgeable staff, which also includes parental input. A valid and reliable evaluation will result in effective individualized education programs for eligible students. The specific areas addressed in principle three are written notice and consent for evaluation, evaluation procedures and instruments, eligibility determination, reevaluation and continuing eligibility.

## **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive Plan
- File Reviews
- Eligibility Guide
- Inventory
- Employment Records
- Evaluation Reports

### **Meets Requirements**

Comprehensive evaluations are conducted by a team of knowledgeable staff, which includes parent input.

The Menno Public School completes valid and reliable evaluations, which result in effective individualized education programs for eligible students.

The Menno Public School ensures that evaluation or reevaluation procedures and instruments meet the minimum requirements.

The Menno IEP teams consider evaluation or reevaluation findings and determine whether the child has or continues to have a particular category of disability.

The reevaluations are conducted in accordance with all procedural requirements and procedures ensure the student is appropriately evaluated.

### **Out of Compliance**

The Menno Public School does not provide appropriate written notice and obtain informed consent before assessments are administered to a child as part of an evaluation or reevaluation.

## **Validation Results**

### **Meets Requirements**

The monitoring team agrees that all items identified by the steering committee in Principle-3 Appropriate Evaluation meets requirements.

### **Out of Compliance**

#### **Prior Notice and Parent Consent ARSD 24:05:30:17**

State administration rules state that prior notice/parent consent must be acquired for initial evaluation and reevaluation. The Menno steering committee indicated that this was not consistently done. In interviews and file reviews the monitoring team verified this as out of compliance. An example of this was a prior notice indicating that a hearing screening would be completed, which was not found in the file. Another example was that an adaptive behavior evaluation was completed for a child, but the prior notice did not indicate this would be completed.

## **Principle 4 – Procedural Safeguards**

Parents of children with disabilities have certain rights available. The school makes parents aware of these rights and makes sure they are understood. The specific areas addressed in principle four are adult student/transfer of rights, content of rights, consent, written notice, confidentiality and access to records, independent educational evaluation (IEE), complaint procedures, and due process hearings.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive Plan
- File Reviews
- Parent Rights Brochure
- Prior Notice/Consent Form
- IEP Form
- Parent Survey
- Complaints
- Due Process Hearing Requests

#### **Meets Requirements**

The Menno Public School ensures that special education rights transfer from the parent to the adult student at age 18 unless (1) the IEP team determines that the student does not have the ability to provide informed consent with respect to his or her educational program or (2) the parent has obtained legal guardianship including the scope of educational matters.

The Menno Public School ensures the parents have been fully informed in their native language or another mode of communication (if necessary) of all information relevant to the activity for which consent is sought.

The Menno Public School provides the parents of a child in need of special education or special education and related services with the opportunity to inspect and review all educational records concerning the identification, evaluation, educational placement of the child and the provision of a free appropriate public education.

The Menno Public School ensures that a parent is informed of and has the right to request an independent educational evaluation at public expense if he or she disagrees with an evaluation obtained or conducted by the school district. The Menno Public School does have policy and procedures in place for responding to complaint actions and requests for due process that ensures compliance.

### **Validation Results**

#### **Meets Requirements**

The monitoring team agrees that all items identified by the steering committee in Principle-4 Procedural Safeguards meets requirements.

## **Principle 5 – Individualized Education Program**

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written document for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised by the IEP team, which includes the parent. The specific areas addressed in principle five are IEP team, IEP content, transition components for secondary IEPs, annual reviews, transition from early intervention program, and IEP related issues.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive Plan
- File Reviews
- Teacher Input Forms
- Teacher Surveys
- IEP Technical Assistance Guide

#### **Meets Requirements**

The Menno Public School ensures the IEP team is comprised of appropriate membership and meets all identified responsibilities.

The Menno Public School ensures the IEP contains all required content.

The Menno Public School has policies and procedures in place to ensure an appropriate IEP is developed and in effect for each eligible student.

### **Validation Results**

#### **Meets Requirements**

The monitoring team agrees that all items identified by the steering committee in Principle-5 Individual Education Program meets requirements.

#### **Out of Compliance**

##### **Issue requiring immediate attention**

##### **ARSD 24:05:27:04 Determination of Related Services**

No present level of performance, goals and objectives were identified for counseling service on two student's IEPs. The monitoring team determined that the Menno Public School must reconvene the students IEP teams to determine if the related service is necessary for the child in order to implement the special education program recommended.

##### **ARSD 24:05:27:13:02 Transition services**

Transition services are a coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome-oriented process, which promotes movement from school to post-school activities. The coordinated set of activities shall be based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests, and shall include instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, the acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation. In student IEPs where transition was addressed the IEP

did not consistently provide information as to who would be responsible to carry out the activities/goals nor were dates given as to when activities would be initiated or completed. In one of three IEPs for transition aged students reviewed no present level of performance was written, which would provide the students individual performance level for the transition service. In addition an interview with the secondary special education teacher indicated transition services could be improved to meet students' unique needs.

## **Principle 6 – Least Restrictive Environment**

After the IEP is developed or reviewed, the IEP team must decide where the IEP services are to be provided. Consideration begins in the general education classroom for school age students. The specific areas addressed in principle six are placement decisions, consent for initial placement, least restrictive environment procedures, preschool children, and LRE related issues.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

- Comprehensive Plan
- Budgeted Services
- Budget information
- File reviews
- Enrollment
- Complaints
- Hearings
- Monitoring
- Surveys
- Placement Alternative Data
- Placement Data by Age

### **Meets Requirements**

All children receive services in the least restrictive environment with the supports they need for their successful participation.

### **Validation Results**

### **Meets Requirements**

The monitoring team agrees that all items identified by the steering committee in Principle-6 Least Restrictive Environment meets requirements.